

STATE SENATOR • MARK SCHAUER • 19TH DISTRICT

Schauer Press Release



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Dems Again Call on GOP to Address Skyrocketing Gas Prices

LANSING - Responding to escalating gas prices and to the news that Exxon Mobile Corp. has now eclipsed Wal-Mart as the most profitable company in the world, Michigan Senate Democrats renewed their call for federal action to protect Michigan drivers and fellow consumers from around the nation. Last year, Democrats introduced Senate Resolution 61 that calls upon Congress and the President to take immediate action to provide relief from high gas prices.

"Gas prices are already causing a heavy burden on Michigan drivers and families and we know they will only get higher this summer," said Sen. Mark Schauer (D-Battle Creek). "The Michigan Legislature should send a strong message to the President and Republican-controlled Congress that consumers need a break."

According to Fortune magazine, Exxon Mobile, the San Antonio, Texas-based oil and gas titan reported \$36.1-billion in net income last year making it more profitable than the next four companies on the Fortune 500 combined. This news comes as Michigan retail prices have risen more than 12 cents last week to an average of \$2.65 a gallon for self-serve regular, according to a recent survey of Michigan gas stations. That is about 40 cents higher than the same period a year ago.

"Michigan's auto industry is already doing its best to meet the many challenges we face and these prices could devastate our chances for a rebound," said Sen. Deb Cherry (D-Burton). "Out-of-control gas prices threaten our ability to maximize economic development and create jobs, and Republicans in Washington and Lansing need to make energy relief a priority before it's too late."

Democrats noted that Governor Jennifer Granholm intervened after Hurricane Katrina by making a direct appeal to the oil companies. Following her efforts, oil companies reduced gas prices by 8% almost immediately. Bush has yet to publicly make any attempt to convince oil companies making record-breaking profits to provide any relief for struggling consumers.

SR 61 has been sent to the Committee on Transportation. Committee Chairman Judd Gilbert (R-Algonac) has not scheduled SR 61 for a public hearing.

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Mark Schauer is the Senate Democratic Floor Leader. He represents the 19th Senate District, which includes all of Calhoun County and most of Jackson County.